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AUTHOR Brown-Wright, Dianne; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A pilot study was conducted to investigate preferred leadership style, faculty job satisfaction, and faculty attitudes toward decentralized budget authority at a selected midwestern research institution. An "Attitude Toward Decentralization" (ATD) scale was developed to determine faculty attitudes toward decentralized authority and responsibility. Modified versions of two other scales, the Least Preferred Co-Worker Scale developed by Fiedler (1967) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Davis and Weitzel (1970) were combined with the ADT scale; the resulting instrument is referred to as the "Preferred Leadership Style Questionnaire" (PLSQ). The PLSQ was administered to a mostly white faculty ranging in age from 31 to 60 years old. A total of 39 of 60 solicited faculty members participated. The research design was ex post facto and exploratory. Results revealed faculty preference for a participative style of leadership, consistent with decentralization concepts, but no significant relationship between how much an individual enjoyed his/her position overall and desire for budget decentralization was found. The levels of job satisfaction were found to be consistent with earlier empirical findings. An appendix contains 5 tables of data and 16 references. (JB)

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Dianne Brown-Wright, Isadore Newman, and Larry Bradley

The University of Akron

Presented at the Ohio Academy of Science annual meeting at Youngstown State University
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LEADERSHIP, FACULTY, AND DECENTRALIZED AUTHORITY

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Abstract: This pilot study was conducted to investigate preferred leadership style, faculty job satisfaction, and faculty attitudes toward decentralized budget authority. An Attitude Toward Decentralization Scale (ATD) scale was developed to determine faculty attitudes toward decentralized authority and responsibility. Modified versions of the Least Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) scale, developed by Fiedler (1967) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), developed by Dawis and Weitzel (1970) were combined with the ATD and used as an estimate of preferred leadership style and to determine faculty job satisfaction respectively. The resulting instrument was a Preferred Leadership Style Questionnaire (PLSQ). The PLSQ was administered to faculty at a selected midwestern, research university. The research design was ex post facto and exploratory. Results of the study revealed faculty preference for a participative style of leadership, consistent with decentralization concepts. The level of faculty job satisfaction was found to be consistent with earlier empirical findings.

Introduction

The literature defines leaders as individuals who possess power to influence others. Such power comes in five forms. Leaders can influence others through the positions they hold (legitimate power), through their ability to provide rewards (reward power), through their knowledge or technical expertise (expert power), through their ability to punish (coercive power), or through their personalities, i.e., the extent to which others identify with and like them (referent power).

Research suggests that "referent" power leads to greater satisfaction and performance of followers as well as to increased organizational effectiveness (Fiedler, 1974; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989). Such referent power can ensue as a result of strategies such as empowering others. Decentralized authority is a form of such empowerment. More specifically, decentralization is described in the literature as a motivator for increased productivity as well as increased self-efficacy.

Empirical research also suggests that work satisfaction is related to three conceptually independent features of organizational occupational settings (Bishop, 1964,;

Fiedler, 1967; Garland & O'Reilly, 1976; Mitchell, 1970; Van Maanen & Katz, 1976). These three features are: job properties, interaction context, and organizational policies.

Van Maanen & Katz (1976) define job properties as characteristics of the everyday task processes involved in a particular line of work. Interaction context is viewed as the characteristics of the day-to-day interpersonal environment in which the person carries out his/her other work. Finally, organizational policies are viewed as characteristics of the general rules and standards which are enforced managerially in the workplace.

Using these three features - - which are referred to as loci - - this pilot study investigated faculty attitudes toward leadership and decentralized budget authority. This study also investigated faculty job satisfaction. More specifically, the pilot study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do faculty enjoy their positions?
2. Do differences exist in terms of job satisfaction between male and female faculty?
3. What are faculty attitudes towards selected aspects of the concept of decentralization, i.e, do faculty prefer to have their own budgets?
4. Do faculty prefer to make their own budget category allocation decisions and be accountable for such decisions in terms of meeting job responsibilities?
5. What leadership style is preferred by faculty and does this preferred leadership style differ cross-culturally among faculty members?

METHODOLOGY

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE:

The subject population for this pilot study consisted of college faculty at a selected midwestern, research institution within customary faculty rank categories, i.e, instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. These faculty ranged in age from 31-60+ and two to twenty-five plus years experience in their current position. Mean years of experience totaled sixteen. Based on self-reporting, the subjects were 85%

Caucasian, 8% African American, and 5% Native American. Two percent of the respondents indicated "other" as their race/ethnic origin.

INSTRUMENT:

The instrument used in this pilot study was developed based upon an attempt to identify three major concepts: (1) preferred leadership style, (2) attitudes towards decentralization, specifically budgetary decisionmaking for faculty, and (3) faculty job satisfaction. As can be noted from Table I, the resulting instrument consisted of a demographics section, plus seventeen items. These seventeen items are broken into three sections such that items 1-8, section II are measuring job satisfaction; items 9-14, section III, leadership style and responsibility; and items 1-3, section IV, dealing with issues related to budget and decentralization concepts.

The items that make up these sections are modifications of the Least Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) scale developed by Fiedler (1967) as an estimate of leadership and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Dawis & Weitzel (1970) to determine faculty job satisfaction. These modified instruments were combined with an Attitude Toward Decentralization (ATD) scale developed by the researchers to determine faculty attitudes toward decentralized authority and responsibility. The resulting instrument is referred to as the Preferred Leadership Style Questionnaire (PLSQ).

RELIABILITY:

To estimate the accuracy of the participants in responding to the PLSQ, at least two sets of items in the questionnaire were used to measure the same concept, e.g., faculty indication of enjoyment in coming to work and enjoyment of one's position ($r = .84$; $p = .0001$) As can be noted from the latter, responses to these two questions were answered in a consistent manner. Relatedly, responses indicating enjoyment in coming to work were also highly correlated with respondent's indication of enjoying being around the people worked with ($r = .85$;$p = .0001$).

VALIDITY:

Two validity attempts were made. First, content validity was sought by selecting items from existing instruments with acceptable levels of validity. These items were modified for purposes of the study and placed in one of the three categories of interest. Secondly, a preliminary factor analysis of the (PLSQ) was conducted (see Table II). This factor analysis supported the construct validity of the instrument, producing three interpretable factors that were consistent with the three intended theoretical constructs of the PLSQ (i.e., factor I = decentralization concepts; factor II = job satisfaction, and factor III = leadership and responsibility - see Table II).

RESEARCH DESIGN:

The research design is ex post facto and exploratory. It is important to emphasize that this is a pilot study with the major intention to determine if correlations support the theoretical constructs the investigators are interested in and to develop a measurement instrument.

STATISTICAL PROCEDURES:

The statistical procedures were both descriptive and inferential. The major inferential statistic used was the test of significance on the correlation coefficients. In addition, a principle component factor analysis was run with varmax rotations with ones in the diagonal, and with an eigen value of one as a cut-off.

RESULTS

The PLSQ was administered to faculty within a selected college of a midwestern, research university. A total of thirty-nine out of sixty faculty participated in the survey, representing a sixty-five percent response rate. Findings were as follows:

FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION:

Approximately 80% of the faculty surveyed indicated that they enjoyed their positions. The latter is consistent with recent research findings (e.g., Willie & Stecklein, 1982; Jones & Nowotny, 1990; American Association of State Colleges and Universities,

1990; Tack & Patitu, 1992) that, overall, faculty are satisfied with their jobs. Unlike earlier studies (Hulin & Smith, 1964,; Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1968; Sheppard & Herrick, 1972; Hollon & Gemmill, 1976; Winkler, 1982) however, results of this pilot did not reveal a significant difference between how much men as compared to women were satisfied with their position. Results of these earlier studies reported women as less satisfied with their positions than their male counterparts. Results of the pilot study were consistent with Wolfson's (1986) finding of no significant differences in the level of job satisfaction between male and female educators.

FACULTY ATTITUDES TOWARD DECENTRALIZATION:

Sixty-three percent of the respondents reported perferring to have their own budget. Further, a significant correlation was found between the extent to which a faculty member would accept a job requiring the supervision of others and preference to have one's own budget, even if the latter would require more paperwork and responsibility ($r=.42$; $p=.009$). The extent to which faculty indicated enjoyment of being in a leadership position was also significantly correlated with preference to having one's own budget ($r=.45$; $p=.004$) as well as willingness to be accountable for budget category allocation decisions ($r=.60$; $p=.0001$).

Relatedly, over 80% of the respondents indicated that benefits of such a decentralized system would outweigh negatives. Respondents indicating that benefits of such a system would outweigh negatives also indicated the following: (1) a willingness to supervise others, (2) enjoyment derived from being in leadership positions, (3) a realization of accountability for decisions in terms of meeting job responsibilities that come with the concept of decentralization.

Interestingly, responses indicating enjoyment in coming to work were found to be significantly correlated with liking jobs where one can make decisions and be responsible for one's own work ($r= .30$;$p= .05$). The latter further supports the concept of decentra-

lization.

PREFERRED LEADERSHIP:

A highly negative correlation was found between enjoying being around people and depending on someone else's ability rather than one's own ability (r=-.37; p=.02). One could infer from the latter, or rather, the latter could be interpreted as not enjoying being in situations where one is dependent, say, on one's supervisor. Relatedly, a positive correlation was found between liking jobs where one could make decisions and be responsible for one's own work, and having a say in any decision made by the group of which one is a part (r=.47; p=.002).

Having a say in any decision made by a group one is in was also found to be significantly correlated with liking jobs where one can make decisions and be responsible for one's own work (r=.47; p=.002); enjoying being in positions of leadership (r=.45; p=.004); wanting to learn about something that will affect one (r=.49; p=.001); and willingness to be accountable (r=.40; p=.01).

More specifically, these data reveal that respondents reporting that they enjoy their jobs also enjoy and desire independence and are willing to accept responsibility. Further, faculty who like their jobs the most tend to endorse items that are consistent with decentralization principles.

CONCLUSION

Interestingly, results of this pilot study indicated that there appeared to be no significant relationship between how much an individual enjoyed their position overall and desire for budget decentralization. This, along with the descriptive data that most of the respondents preferred their own budgets makes it clear that this is not because faculty are dissatisfied with their jobs. Rather, it appears that faculty prefer more responsibility and are willing to take on subsequent accountability for budget allocation category decisions.

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APPENDIX

Table I

Summary of Descriptive Data

Section 1: General Information

1. **Gender:** Female 13 - 33% Male 26 - 67%

2. **Age:** 25-30 0 31-36 2 - 5% 37-42 5 - 13% 43-47 5 - 13% 47+ 11 - 28%

   48-53 3 - 8% 54-59 5 - 13% 60+ 6 - 15% NR 2 - 5%

3. **No. of Departments:** 5

4. **No. of Years in Current Position:** <6 11 - 32% 20+ 19 - 58% 25+ 7 - 21%

5. **Rank** (Check one): Full Professor 22 - 56% Associate Professor 5 - 13%
   Assistant Professor 9 - 23% Instructor 2 - 5% Other None

6. **Race/Ethnic Origin:** Asian 0 - 0% African American 3 - 8% Hispanic 0 - 0%
   Native American 2 - 5% Caucasian 33 - 25%

7. **Professional Experience in Public (K-12) Schools** (Check one): Yes 35 - 92% No 3 - 8%

Section II - Please read each statement. Decide what your normal or usual attitude, feeling, or behavior would be and circle your response:

A = Rarely (less than 10% of the time)
B = Occasionally (about 30% of the time)
C = Sometimes (about 31-60% of the time)
D = Frequently (about 70% of the time)
E = Usually (more than 90% of the time)

		A	B	C	D	E*	$\bar{x}$	SD
1.	The degree to which your job provides you with freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling course load.	16 41%	4 10%	13 33%	5 13%	1 3%	2.3	1.2
2.	The degree to which you receive information concerning your effectiveness or performance	12 32%	5 13%	10 26%	8 21%	3 8%	2.0	1.3
3.	The degree to which you receive assistance in carrying out day-to-day responsibilities.	12 32%	10 26%	6 16%	9 24%	1 3%	2.4	1.2
4.	The degree to which you have valued input into the establishment of your unit's budget	27 69%	3 8%	6 15%	1 3%	2 5%	1.7	1.2
5.	The degree to which you have valued input into determining your participation on college committees	4 11%	8 21%	12 32%	6 16%	8 21%	3.2	1.3
6.	Overall, how much do you enjoy your position?	1 3%	4 11%	7 18%	15 40%	11 30%	3.8	1.1
7.	Overall, how much do you enjoy coming to work?	3 8%	1 3%	11 28%	11 28%	13 33%	3.8	1.2
8.	Overall, how much do you enjoy being around the people you work with?	2 5%	4 10%	8 21%	12 31%	13 33%	3.8	1.2

Table I (continued)

	A	B	C	D	E*	$\bar{x}$	SD
Section III:							
9. The degree to which you like jobs where you can make decisions and be responsible for your own work	0 0	0 0	0 0	7 18%	32 82%	4.8	0.4
10. The degree to which you like to have a say in any decisions made by any group you are in	0 0	1 3%	5 13%	11 28%	22 56%	4.5	0.8
11. The extent to which you will accept jobs that require you to supervise others	1 3%	3 8%	8 21%	18 46%	9 23%	3.8	0.1
12. The extent to which you enjoy being in a position of leadership	1 3%	2 5%	9 23%	14 36%	13 33%	3.9	1.0
13. The extent to which you want to learn about something that will affect you	0 0	1 3%	3 8%	5 13%	30 76%	4.6	0.7
14. The extent to which you prefer situations where you can depend on someone else's ability rather than your own	19 50%	9 24%	8 21%	2 5%	0 0	1.8	0.1

Section IV: After each question, please circle your response.

	Preferred	Not Preferred		
1. Would you prefer to have your own budget which would require more paperwork and responsibility of you?	24 63%	14 37%	.63	0.5
2. Would you prefer to make your own budget category allocation decisions, realizing that you will be accountable for such decisions in terms of meeting job responsibilities?	31 84%	6 16%	.84	0.37
	Yes	No		
3. Overall, in your opinion, will benefits of such a decentralized system outweigh negatives?	28 80%	7 20%	.80	0.41

N = 39

*A-E may not = n in each case because total N may not have responded to survey item.

Table II

Factor Analysis

Section	Item*	Variable	Decentralization Desirability	Job Satisfaction	Leadership Responsibility
II	1	Degree	-0.07947	-0.04951	0.16880
	2	Receive	-0.37908	0.12351	0.10576
	3	Assist	-0.17890	0.51692	-0.04975
	4	Valued	0.24746	0.27779	-0.26604
	5	College	-0.00147	0.21407	0.00361
	6	Overall	-0.01319	0.88679	-0.07946
	7	Enjoy	-0.09509	0.90821	0.03152
	8	People	0.14915	0.86455	-0.00562
III	9	Jobs	0.22764	0.19894	0.70269
	10	Say	0.39958	-0.16823	0.81899
	11	Extent	0.58112	-0.24221	0.45673
	12	Leader	0.72335	-0.02546	0.30066
	13	Learn	-0.05759	-0.32733	0.59888
	14	Prefer	0.18020	-0.53394	-0.58009
IV	1	Budget	0.61907	-0.01455	0.31610
	2	Account	0.93937	-0.13365	0.03902
	3	Benefit	0.85626	-0.12537	-0.09235

Variance Explained by Each Factor

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
3.381783	3.319826	2.388937	1.627387	1.627153

*Note: Cross-reference with Table I re: Item # and variables.

Table III

	SAT	LEAD	DEC
SAT	1.00000	-0.28642	-0.23752
	0.0	0.0904	0.1832
	37	36	33
LEAD	-0.28642	1.00000	0.53941
	0.0904	0.0	0.0008
	36	38	35
DEC	-0.23752	0.53941	1.00000
	0.1832	0.0008	0.0
	33	35	35

Table IV

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Prob>F
Model	2	11.86321	5.9316	8.173	0.0015
Error	30	21.77316	0.72577		
C Total	32	33.63636			

Root MSE	0.85192	R-square	0.3527
Dep Mean	2.3664	Adj R-sq	0.3095
C.V.	36.04287		

Parameter Estimates

Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	T for HO: Parameter=0	Prob>T
INTERCEP	1	-2.516036	-1.472	0.1513
SAT	1	-0.002305	-0.083	0.9344
LEAD	1	0.206937	3.706	0.0009

Note: SAT = Σ items 1-8, Section II
LEAD = Σ items 9-14, Section III
DEC = Σ items 1-3, Section IV

Table V

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Prob>F
Model	3	12.17050	4.05683	5.481	0.0041
Error	29	21.46586	0.74020		
C Total	32	33.63636			

Root MSE	0.86035	R-square	0.3618
Dep Mean	2.36364	Adj R-sq	0.2958
C.V.	36.39942		

Parameter Estimates

Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	T for HO: Parameter=0	Prob>T
INTERCEP	1	-6.411432	-1.020	0.3163
SAT	1	0.150196	0.630	0.5335
LEAD	1	0.365126	1.449	0.1579
SATXLEAD	1	-0.006249	-0.644	0.5244

Numerator:	0.3073	DF:	1	F value:	0.4151
Denominator:	0.740202	DF:	29	Prob>F:	0.5244